

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USNATO 03131 241917Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 03131

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: IT, UR, NATO
SUBJECT: SOVIET REQUEST FOR SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES IN
NAPLES

REFS: (A) ROME 4887 DTG 151746Z MAR 78, (B) STATE 55989
DTG 040147Z MAR 78, (C) USNATO 03018 DTG 221657Z (NOTAL)
1. IN RESPONSE TO SUGGESTION (REF A) THAT SOVIET
EFFORTS TO FIND SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN BE INTRODUCED INTO AN APPROPRIATE
NATO FORUM, WE BELIEVE THAT THE NATO DRAFTING
GROUP THAT WILL SOON BE DISCUSSING THE SEMI-
ANNUAL MEDITERRANEAN REPORT (REF C) WOULD PROVIDE
AN OPENING. THE REPORT SPECIFICALLY ASSESSES SOVIET
PENETRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND WE WOULD PLAN,
IF WASHINGTON AGREES, TO LAY PARTICULAR STRESS ON
THE QUESTION OF SOVIET EFFORTS TO SECURE PORT
FACILITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN DURING THE
DISCUSSION AND DRAFTING OF THE REPORT.

2. THE REPORT WILL BE DISCUSSED BY THE NAC IN
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PAGE 02 USNATO 03131 241917Z

LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY AND WE WOULD PLAN ON THAT
OCCASION AS WELL TO VOICE OUR CONCERN OVER SOVIET
EFFORTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND TO INVITE COMMENTS
FROM OTHERS. THIS APPROACH WOULD SURFACE THE ISSUE
IN A GENERAL FASHION AND GIVE THE ITALIANS OPPORTUNITIES
AT DIFFERENT LEVELS TO RAISE THEIR OWN PROBLEM.

3. WE WOULD BE SOMEWHAT RELUCTANT TO TAKE INITIATIVE OURSELVES TO INTRODUCE IN NATO THE SPECIFIC QUESTION OF SOVIET DESIRE FOR ACCESS TO ITALIAN SHIP REPAIR FACILITIES. SINCE THE US HAS MADE ITS CONCERN CLEAR BILATERALLY (REFS A AND B), THE ITALIANS WOULD LIKELY RESENT OUR RAISING THE SOVIET REQUESTS HERE EVEN IN COORDINATION WITH THEM. IF THE ITALIANS ARE NOT DRAWN INTO A DISCUSSION OF THE SOVIET APPROACHES BY THE TACTIC WE SUGGEST IN PARAS 1-2 ABOVE, THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER MORE DIRECT PRODDING IN NATO OR REQUESTS TO ALLIES TO MAKE BILATERAL DEMARCHES TO THE ITALIANS.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT CONCURRENCE IN ABOVE APPROACH. BENNETT

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Message Attributes

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